

permanency for every child, and recognize the essential role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have in the lives of children in foster care throughout the United States.

The goal of this special month is to raise awareness about the experiences and needs of the more than 400,000 youth in the foster care system.

It is also an opportunity to celebrate the thousands of dedicated foster families who care for these children as well as the social workers and service providers who support them.

I'd like to share a few statistics that showcase the child welfare landscape.

In 2013, there were an estimated 399,546 children in foster care.

In Ohio, there are about 14,000 children in foster care and 2,500 of these children are waiting for adoptive homes.

We cannot allow these statistics to shape the reality of our nation's foster youth.

All children deserve safe, loving, and permanent homes.

We have a responsibility to continue to create policies that will improve outcomes and the overall well-being of foster youth and their families.

While we have made progress, there is still much more to do.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to enable every child in foster care can succeed.

Every child in our country deserves the opportunity to succeed, and I hope that throughout the month of May, we'll be able to raise awareness to the needs of foster children across the United States.

COMMEMORATING THE 50-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF HEAD START

HON. STACEY E. PLASKETT

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 2015

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50-year anniversary of Head Start in this country, and to honor the many professionals whose dedication to early childhood education has kept the program going.

But as we are celebrating the successes of Head Start, let us not overlook the fact that our commitment to early education and our efforts as a body to preserve the Head Start program are not exactly even-keeled.

While Head Start has served more than 30 million children and families in urban and rural areas across the country, in many cities, families see long waiting lists.

In my home district in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the funded enrollment in Head Start is just under 900, but there are more than 750 children on the waiting list—an increase from the 600 who were on the list the year before. This in part, comes as a result of funding constraints that has prevented the expansion of Head Start.

I don't have to stress the importance of this program. Access to Head Start not only improves children's preschool outcomes, but has been shown to positively impact high school graduation rates and even help families move out of poverty.

It is my hope that this body continues to hold firm the commitment to providing quality early education for our children and work together in closing the educational opportunity gap.

Half a century later, President Lyndon Johnson's vision and words still hold true: this is, in fact, "one of the most constructive, and one of the most sensible, and also one of the most exciting programs that this nation has ever undertaken."

Let's continue investing in our most valuable resource: our children.

HONORING DIANA MAAS

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 2015

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Diana Maas for her many contributions to the House of Representatives and specifically to my office. Diana will be leaving my office to pursue opportunities back in her home state of Wisconsin.

Diana first came to Capitol Hill as a Staff Assistant for Congressman Dave Obey. She joined the staff of Senator Herb Kohl in 2011. In 2011, she joined my staff as Legislative Correspondent. From day one in my office, Diana worked tirelessly on behalf of the citizens of western and central Wisconsin. As Diana moved up in my office, she became an integral part of the legislative team. She was particularly successful in working on awarding the Medal of Honor to Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing. One hundred and fifty years after his death at the Battle of Gettysburg. Lieutenant Cushing now has received his due recognition, in part because of Diana's commitment to navigating legislation down the often complicated path of awarding the Medal of Honor. While working to honor Lt. Cushing, Diana simultaneously worked tirelessly on behalf of our veterans and students.

Diana has returned to the great state of Wisconsin and has joined the Spooner School District as their Communications Specialist. While I am sorry to see her leave my staff after three years, I wish her the best of luck in her new role. Diana embodies the term public service and has worked tirelessly to make our nation a better place, which has not been easy given the current toxic environment. It is unfortunate that we are losing such a competent and dedicated public servant.

Mr. Speaker, on my behalf; thank you to Diana for her service and dedication to not only the constituents of the Third District of Wisconsin, but to all Americans.

STROKE AWARENESS MONTH

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus, I rise today to recognize the month of May as Stroke Awareness Month.

Stroke, an attack in which blood flow and oxygen to the brain are blocked, is the leading

cause of long-term disability in the United States. Each year, more than 795,000 Americans suffer from stroke, and in my own home state of Oregon those numbers are above the national average. The health care expenses, including associated medications and missed days of work, cost the United States an estimated \$34 billion each year.

The human costs, however, are more devastating. In the United States alone, an annual average of 130,000 of those who have had a stroke die. Even those who survive often experience a significant decrease in their quality of life. Over two-thirds of survivors must live with sometimes overwhelming long-term consequences, such as paralysis, motor activity, speech, and the ability to understand speech. Many of those survivors and their families also face financial repercussions. Some must even deplete their savings and sell their assets just to cover the costs associated with post-stroke care.

As part of Stroke Awareness Month, we must ensure our constituents understand that stroke is treatable and preventable, as long as citizens arm themselves with the proper diagnostic tools and health information. Common stroke symptoms include: crushing chest pain; sudden weakness of the face, arm, or leg; sudden confusion; trouble speaking or understanding speech; sudden trouble walking or seeing; loss of balance; and sudden, severe headache. The ability to recognize these symptoms and seek medical attention immediately is critical to surviving a stroke and minimizing long-term disability.

Stroke affects people of all ages, but several underlying factors that put individuals at higher risk include unhealthy diets, tobacco use, and physical inactivity. Understanding the risks involved with certain lifestyle choices and making healthier choices can often help reduce a person's risk of stroke.

The federal government needs to be a better partner with stroke survivors, and it is the aim of our Congressional Neuroscience Caucus to do just that. We must find ways to increase the effectiveness of the federal investment in developing new treatments. In addition, we have an obligation to work with survivors and their families to make the path to recovery less arduous. Options we should consider include improving access to post-stroke therapy and finding ways to reduce the financial impact on survivors and their families. One important first step is recognize May as Stroke Awareness month in order to continue to educate Americans about stroke symptoms, prevention, and treatments.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAUNCH OF HEAD START

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 2015

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the launch of Head Start.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson started Head Start and the program has since grown to provide children from low-income families access to comprehensive preschool programs and prepare them for kindergarten and a successful future.

Head Start is a key component of our national commitment to give every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, an opportunity to succeed in school and in life.

Access to Head Start clearly improves children's preschool outcomes across developmental domains on multiple measures.

There are 39,293 Head Start students in Ohio.

Within my district, in Franklin County, Head Start serves 3,351 young students.

I support the President's budget request for Head Start, which increases funding by \$1.5 billion.

I believe that we all should commit to supporting early childhood education, this crucial program, and work together, in a bipartisan way, to ensure that every child in America has an equal shot at success in school and beyond.